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## Unraveling the role of sense of coherence in coronary heart disease patients

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## Acknowledgements

A recent study has shown that the more appreciation we show, the happier we feel. Everyone who has decided to pursue a PhD knows how challenging such a pursuit can be. I hope that I have shown constant appreciation over the last 4 years to those who stood beside to me. However, I would like to express it one more time here in this PhD thesis. There are many people who helped me to choose fight instead of flight or freeze; however, I am going to mention only those who I feel had the biggest contribution to this achievement.

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## About the author

Barbora Šilarová was born on June 12<sup>th</sup>, 1985, in Martin, Slovakia. She completed her master's degree in psychology (*cum laude*) at the University of Trnava, Slovakia. Her qualifying areas were clinical psychology, counselling and education psychology, and in her master thesis she focused on an exploration of power in psychotherapy from an individual point-of-view and the experience of psychotherapists. During her postgraduate study of psychology her interest in the clinical area encouraged her to seek experience interacting with patient populations. Therefore, she did clinical internships at the Departments of Psychiatry and Counselling. After her university study, in October 2009, she started working as a researcher at PJ Safarik University in Kosice, Slovak Republic, and at the same time began her PhD studies at the University of Groningen, the Netherlands. As a PhD student, she coordinated a three-way longitudinal study focusing on patients undergoing coronary angiography. In her PhD project she explored evidence on the potential utility of sense of coherence in cardiovascular research, prevention and rehabilitation. Additionally, she examined whether sense of coherence and other psychological factors are part of the pathways that explain ethnic differences in the recurrence of coronary heart disease. After finishing her fieldwork, she entered in 2011 a separate Research Master training programme. She earned an MSc degree (research) in Clinical and Health Psychology in 2013 at Leiden University, the Netherlands. During her Research Master studies, she had an opportunity to acquaint herself with psychiatric epidemiology research. She was involved in a multidisciplinary group of researchers looking at the causes of metabolic syndrome in bipolar disorder when compared with a major depressive disorder and non-psychiatric controls. Moreover, she was involved in a research project on the association between Catechol-O-Methyltransferase and social anxiety among adolescents, focusing on the specific role of cognitive ability. In 2011 she was a member of an EU-funded project that explored European core indicators in diabetes mellitus. Since 2011 she has been a member of another research team which focuses on longitudinal research on incapacitating chronic diseases. In addition, as a member of several international professional organisations, she has bolstered her knowledge in qualitative and quantitative research processes conducted in various countries.

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